

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for a computer system comprises:
 - opening a first file describing a first object in an object environment;
 - determining a reference for a second object, wherein the second object includes a plurality of attributes;
 - 5 receiving a second file describing the second object from a storage system; in response to the reference;
 - opening the second file describing the second object in the object environment;
 - determining a modified value for an attribute from the plurality of attributes
 - 10 for the second object; and
 - including in the first file the reference for the second object and the modified value for the attribute;
 - wherein the second object is not stored in the first file.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein the storage system comprises one of
- 15 the group: network directory, asset management system, database management system.
3. The method of claim 2 further comprising storing the first file including the reference to the second object and the modified value for the attribute in the storage system.
4. The method of claim 1 further comprising geometrically coupling the
- 20 first object to the second object in the object environment.
5. The method of claim 2
 - wherein the first file includes a reference to third object and a override value for an attribute of the third object; and
 - wherein the method further comprises:
 - 25 determining the reference for the third object in response to the first file;
 - receiving a third file describing the third object from the storage system, in response to the reference to the third object;

opening the third file describing the third object in the object environment; and

modifying a value for the attribute of the third object from a default value to the override value in response to the first file.

5 6. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

opening a third file describing a third object in an object environment, wherein the third file includes a reference to the second object and includes a override value for the attribute;

determining the reference for the second object in response to the third file;

10 receiving the second file describing the second object from the storage system; in response to the reference;

opening the second file describing the second object in the object environment; and

15 modifying the value for the attribute from a default value to the override value in response to the third file.

7. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

modifying the second file to include an additional attribute of the second object;

reopening the first file describing the first object in the object environment;

20 determining the reference for the second object;

receiving the second file as modified describing the second object as modified from the storage system; in response to the reference;

opening the second file as modified describing the second object as modified in the object environment;

25 modifying a value for the additional attribute of the second object in the object environment; and

including in the first file the value for the additional attribute.

8. A computer system including an object environment comprises:

a storage system configured to store a first file describing a first object and a second file describing a second object, wherein the storage system is also configured to provide the first file in response to a first reference and configured to provide the second file in response to a second reference; and

5 a processor coupled to the storage system, wherein the processor is configured to open the first file, wherein the processor is configured to determine the second reference in response to the first file, wherein the processor is configured to determine a value of an attribute from the second object in response to the first file, wherein the processor is configured to provide the second reference to the storage system, wherein the processor is
10 configured to receive the second file from the storage system, wherein the processor is configured to open the second file, and wherein the processor is configured to override a default value of the attribute from the second object with the value;

wherein the second object is not stored in the first file.

9. The computer system of claim 8 wherein the storage system comprises
15 one of the group: network directory services, asset management system, database management system.

10. The computer system of claim 9

wherein the processor is also configured to modify the attribute from the second object with a modified value; and

20 wherein the first file is modified to include the modified value.

11. The computer system of claim 9 wherein the processor is also configured to geometrically manipulate the first model and the second model.

12. The computer system of claim 9

wherein the storage system is also configured to store a third file describing a
25 third object, and wherein the storage system is also configured to provide the third file in response to a third reference; and

wherein the processor is configured to determine the third reference in response to the first file, wherein the processor is configured to determine a value of an attribute from the third object in response to the first file, wherein the processor is configured
30 to provide the third reference to the storage system, wherein the processor is configured to receive the third file from the storage system, wherein the processor is configured to open the

third file, and wherein the processor is configured to override a default value of the attribute from the third object with the value.

13. The computer system of claim 9

5 wherein the processor is configured to determine another instance of the
second reference in response to the first file, wherein the processor is configured to
determined another instance of a value of an attribute from the second object in response to
the first file, wherein the processor is configured to provide the second reference to the
storage system, wherein the processor is configured to receive the second file from the
storage system, wherein the processor is configured to open another instance of the second
10 file, and wherein the processor is configured to override a default value of the attribute from
the another instance of the third object with the value.

14. A computer program product for a computer system including a
processor coupled to a server comprises

15 code that directs the processor to allow a user to create a first object in an
object environment;

code that directs the processor to determine a reference to a second object in
the server, wherein the second object includes a plurality of attributes;

code that directs the processor to create an instance of the second object in the
object environment;

20 code that directs the processor to determine a modified value for an attribute
from the plurality of attributes for the second object; and

code that directs the processor to override a default value for the attribute with
the modified value;

wherein the attribute of second object stored in the server is not modified; and

25 wherein the codes reside on a tangible media.

15. The computer program product of claim 14 wherein the server
comprises one of the group: directory server, asset management server, database server.

16. The computer program product of claim 15 further comprising:

30 code that directs the processor to create a first file including the first object,
the reference to the second object in the server, and the modified value for the attribute; and

code that directs the processor to provide the first file to the server for storage;
wherein the first file excludes the second object.

17. The computer program product of claim 14 further comprising:

5 code that directs the processor to create an additional instance of the second
object in the object environment;

code that directs the processor to determine a modified value for an attribute
from the plurality of attributes for the additional instance of the second object; and

code that directs the processor to override a default value for the attribute for
the additional instance of the second object with the modified value.

10 18. The computer program product of claim 17 wherein the modified value
for the attribute for the instance of the second object and the modified value for the attribute
for the additional instance of the second object are different.

19. The computer program product of claim 17

15 wherein the plurality of attributes for the second object include private
attributes and public attributes; and

wherein the public attributes includes the attribute.

20. The computer program product of claim 19 wherein the private
attributes for the second object are the same for the instance of the second object and for the
additional instance of the second object.

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